Califur.2
Califur.2
Costa Mesa, CA
May 5–7, 2006

MARTIN 06'

Welcome to Califur 2.2!

A Welcome Message From Zsanene Stevens; Chairperson for CaliFur 2.2

Hello Everyone,

My name is Zsa'nene (Zee) Stevens. Last year I took the reins of this thing called Califur. This year the theme is Pirates, I particularly enjoy this theme because of the adventure and excitement, and lets face it, they get all the cool clothes! That being said, we have some very cool stuff planned to match the theme this year. Including a treasure hunt, and a several other fun events. We have kept the pet auction, so go buy your slaves and wenches there.

With every year of Califur, we have been growing and expanding, two years ago at Califur.0 we have 340 attendees, last year we had 380, this year we hope to have more than 400. I hope that we keep growing a little bit each year, and as we do we'll make sure that we have more and more fun things to do throughout our time together. It's at this time I would like to announce that our theme for next year is going to be Furry Villains. It should be interesting to see what you all can come up with.

I think it's important at this time to take a moment to recognize all the furs that work so hard every year to make this con happen for all furries who wish to attend I hope to continue to see all the wonderful people that have been their for us and all the new friends we hope to make.

Zsa'nene (Zee) Stevens
Aka TigerEyes Chairwoman

Califur 2.2 Welcomes Lisanne Norman

Author of 'The Sholan Alliance' series (published by DAW Books Inc.)!

"I was born in Glasgow, Scotland, and have recently moved here to live in the USA."Strong-willed, independent, a whirlwind, a dreamer, she lives in another world." These phrases followed me around from my earliest days. They were partly right: I had grander plans than a world, though, I was all ready creating the universe of the Sholan Alliance, where magic,Warriors, and science all co-exist.

I began writing when I was 8 because I couldn't find enough of the books I liked to read. How difficult can it be to write them myself, I thought with all the confidence of a child. After all, the libraries were full of them. It must be easy.

Hmm. Well, by 16 I had to abandon my novel about Martians visiting Earth and forming a rock band because America had just landed on the moon. Life on Mars was unlikely, and any planet in the Solar system was now within reach. The Final Frontier had just gotten closer. Better go further out into space, or write something else, I decided.

Real life took over as I entered college and began to work for the first time, but thanks to the constant nagging of two very good friends, one of whom is the sister of my editor, I finished a novel I'd started back in 1979. It was called Turning Point, and my friend's sister at DAW bought it. The rest, as they say, is history."

and

Mitch de la Guardia

Artist

Ahoy there, I'm Mitch de la Guardia, and I hail from the heavily-rusted state of Washington. I've always been intrigued by history, be it true events or mythology, and having grown up on a steady diet of National Geographic and the Discovery Channel, many aspects of the past seem to manifest themselves in my work. Of course, my love for classic heroism and adventure could also be blamed on me being a comic book junkie as a kid. But no matter the symptoms that led up to my current insanity, I can't help but share the world of characters and events that goes on inside my head, and I do it through my writing and artwork. I love to draw, but more-so I like to tell a story with what I draw. More fun that way.

Oklacon 2006

Oct 27 - 29, 2006
www.oklacon.com

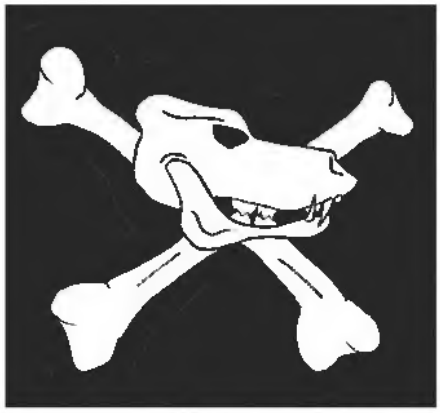
Come join us the weekend of Halloween at gorgeous Roman Nose State Park for America's only outdoor furry and most affordable convention!

Preregister by Oct 14 for $29 which includes the convention registration, all the outdoor games and activities, lodging, and a couple of meals!

Enjoy performances by sub-level 03, see live animals from Safari's Interactive Sanctuary, and delight in our outstanding Guests of Honor: Goldenwolf and Lightfoot Kyohti

So if a weekend of songs around the campfire,
fursuit bocce ball, night hikes, predator and prey,
and a great time with wonderful people in the
most beautiful place in Oklahoma sounds like fun...

REGISTER TODAY!



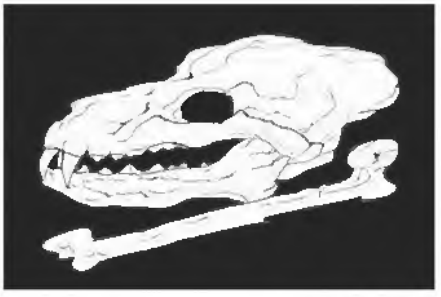
Andrew Whitney

Sumarra Pethran

Chrissy Forwind

Crystal Reagan

Crystal Reagan



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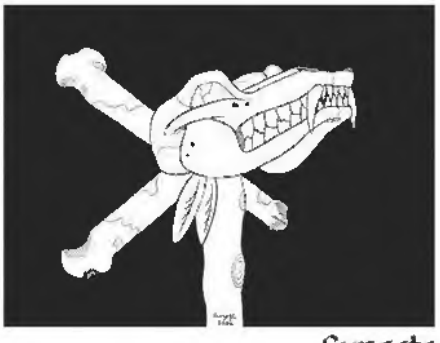


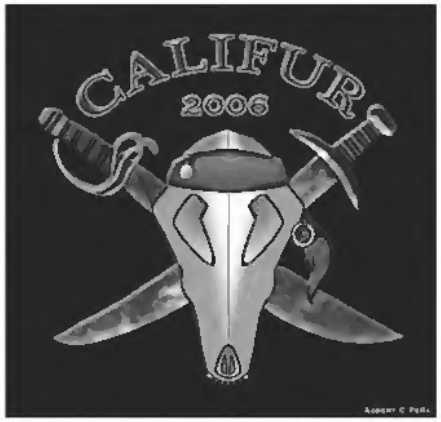
Furgeta

Dragon Orca

AJ Albert

Pirate Skull and Crossbones Submissions

CALIFUR WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE TALENTED ARTISTS WHO SUBMITTED A FURRY SKULL AND CROSSBONES TO OUR CONTEST. WE ALSO WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FURS WHO VOTED AND HELPED US PICK AJ ALBERT'S DESIGN AS OUR WINNER!



Balto

The Legend of Black Hackles
AND THE "SKULL AND CROSS SWORDS"

It has lang been a well known fact the Caribbean has been the home far same of the most deadliest and fierce pirates that ever lived. While mast of you may have heard of the infamous Red Beard or Morgan the pirate the story of the dread pirate Black Hackles is a tale not known ta many. Some says that he was the meanest mare ruthless pirate to ever sail the seas. The mere mention of his name has been known strike fear in the hearts of mortal men. Perhaps that's why many were so eager ta quash the name of Black Hackles forever. Fortunately his stary has not been totally forgotten. This is his story;

Born in Jamaica, John Wolfsbane, was raised in a small coastal town by his single father. His mother had died when he was still too young to remember. By trade His father was a fisherman and naturally like all goad sons John aspired to take after his father's trade. Around the age of 6 he was working full time along side his father learning everything there was to learn about the sea. His father taught him haw to read the tide and even how to navigate by the stars. Although, I must also mention that John's father was also a skilled swords man, after all one had ta be. When one made his living on the sea and lived araund the constant threat of pirates, it would have to be foolish to not know the art of the sword. John's father made sure his san would alsa graw ta be not anly as skillful a sailor as he was but also well schaaled in the art af swordsmanship.

10 years had passed and Jahn had grown from a simple awkward kid to an experienced seaman, but just when it seemed that this story would have a happy ending samething happened that would change John's live for ever. Late one summer afternoon John and his father encountered a band af pirates. Jahn had heard about them but never in time he had spent on the sea had he ever encounter them. Quickly they were upon them. They were baarded and captured. Their baat was pillaged for any salvageable supplies then scuttled to the depths of Davie Jones. Fearing certain death and in a brief moment of apportunity, John's father faught far their escape but only to meet his demise at the end of the pirates sword. Distraught by his father's death Jahn took advantage of the distractian and taak hald of the nearest sword he could find and struck to the heart of the nearest pirate, striking dawn the ship's captain. Little did John know that the captain was not very well liked. This being quite very obvious when instead of the onslaught of attacks he had expected by his actians he naticed that nat one af members of the crew felt inclined ta avenge their captains death, in fact most of them seemed quite relieved and grateful far the favar. Nane was mare grateful then the ship's first mate who had naw apparently became the new captain. Instead of a quick death a he had expected the crew felt same remorse far having killed the lad's father and agreed ta spare his life and make him one af the crew.

Despite his initial hesitatian ta the affer, that day Jahn had became an af them. The Pirates knew that despite his civil upbringing he had praven by his actians that he feared na man and indeed had the heart af a pirate. As time passed Jahn would prave them right. In anly a few years Jahn was pramated to first mate and it wasn't lang after, that Jahn taak his place as the ship's new captain. The years that fallowed. filled of pillaging and ransacking had turned this ane whalesame lad inta a cruel, heartless pirate. Infact Jahn had convinced himself that it was his father's weakness that had gatten him killed that fateful day and it was anly his awn fierce cunning that was the reasan he was alive. Sadly John had strayed far from the path his father had hoped he'd follow and instead followed a path of hatred, greed and anger. The path that would quickly take him to become one of the fiercest pirates that ever lived.

John was in his mid 40's, when he had risen to the top of the fiercest pirates of the Caribbean. In fact he was no longer referred by his given name. It was because af his ruthless range and anger that he had become famous for. He had come to be knawn naw as The Pirate Black Hackles. There was not a part or town that had not experience his ruthlessness. Many feared even the very mention of his name. For years the royal navy sought to capture the pirate but after many years of searching they never succeeded in capturing him. No one ever knows when or how Black Hackes died. Same say he was murdered by his first mate in an argument, others say to prolang his life by striking a deal with the devil himself for his immartal soul. Whatever the case maybe ane thing is certain, for over 100 year after he was rumared ta be dead, the ship "The Cald Blaad" and its' crew (and future crew), flew his flag "the skull and crassed swards". It was thaught that his calars were flaw even after his death, ta cantinue ta strike fear in the hearts af his enemies,. But ponder this, could the rumars have alsa been true that far all thase many years Black Hackles captained the ship himself? I suppase we will never knaw but, which ever the case may be, ane thing rest assured, that when ever the skull and swards was flawn, the name af the dread Pirate Black Hackles was always kept alive in by thase that feared him.

ART BY Shannon Winters

Hi y'all!

This is Jymn Magon, co-creator of TALE SPIN, and I've been asked to do a little blurb about the creation of that dastardly air pirate, Don Karnage. Let me just start by saying that from inception Karnage was always a wolf (sorry, fox fans), but he wasn't always Karnage. In fact his first nomenclature was The Dread Pirate Anthrax (borrowed from the Dread Pirate Robert of "Princess Bride" fame). But Disney lawyers were afraid that the heavy metal band "Anthrax" would sue us, so I was forced to rename our anti-hero literally minutes before our first recording session. I liked the pre-fix "Don" (like Don Corleone), so I added something damaging to the tail-end of it... namely "carnage." (No, no relation whatsoever to the Marvel Spider thingie.) About that time, Billy Crystal was doing his Fernando Lamas character on Saturday Night Live, and we thought that pretentious quality would be perfect for our conceited pirate. Thus, the Spanish accent was born.

Voicewise, I'm sure you all know that the very talented Jim Cummings gave life to the rascally wolf. In fact, Jim has stated that Karnage if one of his all-time favorite roles. I only wish we were still doing more episodes, because Karnage is so much fun to write for.

An interesting note about the Iron Vulture: The first conceptual drawing of the ship was very sci-fi – sleek and white. Thank goodness we garbaged it up! And, of course, nobody in Karnage's wolf pack had the brains to invent such a vehicle... therefore, you must assume that Karnage stole the ship!

Little is known about his lair, but I can tell you this... HEY! What are you--? OUCH!!!

Step aside puny writer-type person. I, Don Karnage, shall tell my <u>own</u> story.

Don Karnage copyright Disney
Art by Patrick Little

I mean it now, get out of here, fleabag. You can't intimidate me! I invented you! And put that stupid sword dow-OW-OW-OW!!!

Make like a tree and do not stay here, hairless non-furry creature! My fans will no longer listen to your lies and puppycock! Now go!

ahem

Hello, you fabulous furballs! It is I, typing to you with my fingers. Hee-hee! And by the way, you look marvelous. (Where did you get that studded collar, if I might be asking?)

What can I tell you that you do not already know about my splendid self? I am, quite simply, a pirate. Hey, do not be making that face! Piracy is an ancient and noble profession. We help alleviate pilots of their bulky cargos and heavy knickity-knacks. Pirates are, how do you say, Goodwill Samaritans!

Do not be fooled by the posturing and Arrrr-ing of such puny fellows as Long John Silver, Jack Sparrow, or Yellowbird. We pirates are a jolly-ha-ha lot, singing songs, dancing dances, and throwing troublemakers out of moving aircraft. Speaking of which, I must get back to my Wild Blue Youngsters – Mad Dog, Dumptruck, Jibber and the rest! I have heard that Shere Khan has a shipment of gold bullion headed for Cape Suzette, and we must make sure that his planes are not overloaded, yes-no? Hee-hee. I am cracking myself upward!

So until next time, my meager minions, stay furry! Oh, and I will be taking that studded collar, thank you.

Don ("I look so beautiful to meeeee!") Karnage

Excerpts from the journal of Lucas Montoya, first officer of the Spanish ship Esperanza, as transcribed by Sarah Silverman and Sarah Baker

31 April 1519 It has been over a month since we, the crew of the Esperanza, disbanded from the fleet or Hernan Cortez. There were 'disagreements' on the treatment of the local peoples we've encountered upon landing in the Americas. I believe Cortez to be a cruel man of little intelegence, most certainly pigheaded. I follow the lead of Captain Vasco. He is keen of mind and quick of wit, yet he is weak of will and quick to temptation. I fear for the well fare of my charge, a young woman of the savage tribe, captured by one of Cortez's men.

She goes by the name of Mitla, and is of a luxurious stature, or was until our 'fine, outstanding' Captain decided to break her spirit by placing her in the ship's brig. As he felt I was of no better use, he posted me as her guard. I spend my time observing her, as she does me. I think she understands my desire to protect her from Vasco. I feel he is merely bideing his time, waiting for her to crack under the conditions of ship life, and beg to be allowed in his quarters. He must bore of his encounters with with Emilio, our ship hand. Perhapes I truely am soft, that I feel for all these poor souls, whilst the rest of the crew truely act as predators of the high seas.

For now, I keep my watchful cat's eye on her and imortalize her in my book, in case her graces one day fail her, and she truely will then be broken.

10 November 1519 LAND! How glorious to be awoken by our crowman Carlos! Our grueling crew was on the brinks of scurvey and cannibalism, amongst their other ravaging urges. I've stopped worrying about Vasco, who seems more preoccupied with the prospects of gold in the Americas. The word on the air is that Cortez has reached the heart of the savage Aztec nation and was greeted by the king as a god. How ridiculous I say thinking that the people must be crazy, but I look at sweet, sad Mitla and think that she can't be as unitelegent as the crew says. She and I have developed a quiet bond. I've taught her Spanish the best I could and she is a strong and eager learner.

I fashioned garments for her of extra leathers and canvas from a sail damaged in a storm. For fear of becoming a demon, I tried not to look when she changed from her torn native garments, but the temptation was too great. I looked upon her form and she seemed unashamed at my gaze. My daydreams of pleasing her were interrupted by a dark snicker. I think it was Mendoza, the ship's cook, who saw her while he was looking for rations in the hold. Ever since he pays her visits and flashes a cruel smile at her and I. The hands on the ship grow restless. Once landed, Mitla is to serve as our guide to El Dorado, the fabled city of gold. Otherwise, she will be randsomed to the lesser king Naachtun, and if that does not work, I fear she will become the pleasure doll of the crew. I plan to abandon the crew with her once we make land fall. I pray she is willing.

12 November 1519 I fear I have made a mistake in under estimating the girl. Upon arrival on land, the swift and cunning creature that she is, Mitla escaped into the forest. Emilio, desiring a rest from sating the appetites of our crew, took chase after her. Francisco, being the swiftest of our crew by possess of him being a horse, recaptured her. Feeling it would be in our best interests, Vasco had her brought back on ship and placed back under my guard. She fought with me and I muscled her

into the brig cage. In my attempt to not over power in such a way that she might be injured, she was able to scar my side with a weapon. I saw it later as she crept up the stairs to the deck when it flashed in the moonlight. A golden Aztec dagger. At least my wound would heal as it wasn't very deep, though it would scar. I think she took great care not to truely injure me. I think that in her heart are survival instincts, and I think they include the instinct to reproduce her species. She truely is a primal being and I find that fascinating.13 November 1519A night behind the cold iron bars has robbed my spirit. I do not understand how Mitla, such a seemingly frail creature, could have survive six months there. I'm lucky that my kindness over those months earned me a position on the new Esperanza. In the middle of last night, the girl stole about the ship and took the life of one, our former captain, Vasco. His unkind eyes and mind feel to his true love; Aztec gold..in the form of Mitla's blade. Under her command, we are to go back ashore and greet her people. I don't know how I shall be introduced, whether as friend or foe.

Hidden Treasure

By Sylys Sable, Ships Steward & Vinson Mink, Navigator

Alas! I hear it every year. Some Fur or another says that they ìdon't go to any of that Convention Programmingî. What a cryin' shame that be! Furry conventions like Califur are run by Furrie's, for Furrie's and, yes the main reason for these gatherings is to have Fun! Furry events allow us all to be with our own, to escape the mundane world and share our true natures with like-mined spirits. Thar be nothin' wrong with partyin' and carousing, (long as things don't get *too* wild!) but thar be lots o' other fun things to do at a convention besides hanging out. Like? Well, listen up me hearties!

Set sail for the Den o' Dealers or Artist's Alley and meet some of the creative types that make Furry an art. Pick up a comic, a 'zine or a book and explore wonderful worlds through tales spun by some of the best fiction writers around. That's right, Furry writers! Go ashore at the iPearl Possumî Creator's Lounge, and get a change to see artists at work. Y' say you don't draw yourself? Well, why not give it a try! Them Furry artists didn't draw right out o' their mother's womb either- they had to try it, and practice makes perfect. You'll be findin' that many artists are more than willing to give helpful tips and encouragement to fledgling sketchers. If ye be lucky, you might even score some great art to add to your own booty. At some conventions you'll find areas dedicated to fursuit construction. Ever wonder how those amazing transformations are accomplished? Drop in and see for yourself. You may find that you have the aptitude to become the next master fursuit maker, or perhaps find someone who is willing to transform you into your fursona.

Adventurous convention programmers search the world over for creators in main stream entertainment who are making Furry themed animation and ilive actionî television shows, short films and features; writing novels and short stories, and writing and drawing comic and graphic novels. Often these creative individuals are unaware of their Furry audience, and are surprised and pleased to be made welcome by our community. That's why so many of them return, year after year. Like so many of us, they have found their Furry Ifamilyî and have sailed home. Come to the iMeet the Guestsî event and get a chance to meet some main stream Furrie's in person. Our guests also have themed Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings, where they can interact more intimately with us. Ya' say you don't enjoy panels where the celebrities sit up on a stage and lecture you; where you never get a chance to talk to them? Well, that's why at Califur (and Southern California Furry conventions of the past) have SIG-style open meetings. Our special guests are not just celebrities, they are part of our family! Come aboard and meet them for yourself.

Besides the Special Guest programming, thar be SIGs that explore interesting topics or provide a meeting place for some Furry sub-families. What species of Furry be yee? There's probably a SIG you can attend where you will find others of your kind. Or, if you're curious about another species, visit their SIG. These aren't lexclusiveî clubs; everyone is welcome! The same goes for other SIGs. Interested in writing or art? Want to discuss creating characters, or worlds for them to populate? Want to know how to make Fursuits or costume accessories? Y' may find SIGS for that or other subjects, everything from collecting plush animals and action figures to ancient and modern weapons, to Furry games and roleplaying, to computers and software, cars, ham radioÖ you name it, and we'll probably have a SIG for it! With so many topics to discuss, everyone has a change to be an ìexpertî, or maybe even learn something. Now, wouldn't that fun?

Thar be other things happenin' all over the convention that are well worth your time, mates. The Fursuit events are always popular. The presentation gives Fursuiter's a change to show off their work on stage, and sometimes perform clever skits. The Fursuit parade usually has more Fursuits per foot than any other event. The parade winds around the convention, through larger function rooms and across the lobby. It's a great opportunity for some candid action photography. The Fursuit Dance is another chance to see the Fursuiters ìin actionî. It be hard to believe they can move like that in all that fur! Like your Furry entertainment a little more imaturei? Then drop anchor at the Pet Auction, or the Fur le Dance Cabaret. These events raise money for worthy charities, so you can have some sexy Furry fun and a few good laughs, all for a good cause!

Thar be are musical happenin's at most Furry conventions, as well asiheadline actsî worth checking out. Califur has it's own iOfficial Toastmasterî and Master of Ceremonies, the hilarious and topical 2, the Ranting Gryphon. If you've been to one of his performances, you'll likely be back for more. If you haven't experienced Furry's own ìnative sonî comic, plan on not missing his act this year. Filk is the

continued on page 12

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Furry Pirates: The Game

Interview with Lise Breakey and Bruce Thomas, authors of Furry Pirates

Why a gamebook about Furry Pirates?

Lise – "There were a number of options that seemed to fit in the same world at different periods of history… Furry Knights, Furry Musketeers, Furry Samurai, Furry Flying Aces, Furry Cops… We went for the pirate one, I think, because our gaming group was playing it at the time, and expressed a lot of enthusiasm."
Bruce – "Well, it just fell out as a natural sequel to Furry Outlaws."

Furry Outlaws?

Bruce – "Yeah, that was our first book. Furry Outlaws was based on the furry Robin Hood genre. It was narrow in scope – just dealing with medieval England – and it was a good venue to introduce the Halogen Game System. Furry Pirates was a much larger endeavor: the whole world. It proved to be a much more popular gamebook. One might say that Furry Outlaws was testing the waters, while Furry Pirates was sailing on those waters, if you don't mind the pun."
Lise – "I would like to point out that the Furry Pirates game book does not, in fact, cover the entire world. There are thousands of square miles of landlocked areas in Mongolia alone that are never described. We stuck to the places that pirates were likely to be found. But yes, it was rather more ambitious than Furry Outlaws."

As a husband / wife writing team, who did what?

Bruce – "I'm the game designer, while Lise is the writer. She took all my gaming rules and put it in a nice fantasy world. And then our good friend, Terrie Smith, did the illustrations."
Lise – "What I did was a lot of research. Fortunately, the golden age of piracy is a popular era in history and there was plenty of material, even before Johnny Depp made it sexy again. And we had endless conversations about how the existence of magic and the diversity of furry species would affect the culture."

How long have you been designing and writing games?

Bruce – "I started working on the Halogen system twenty-five years ago, back in the early days of AD&D. Like many game masters (or dungeon masters as they called them back then), home brew rules were the norm. And soon, as new gamebooks came out, I started incorporating the various bits together that I liked into a custom ruleset. I created my own system, first called GADS (for Generic Attack Defense System), which used percentile dice and skill levels. As it grew to include the rules for magic – which is no small thing –I eventually decided to call it Halogen, partially to differentiate between it and other systems out there that had an acronym name (GURPS, MUDD)."
Lise – "I've been writing about the same amount of time, but it was far less game-oriented than Bruce's work. I wrote a Dungeons and Dragons game module that was published in Dragon Magazine back in 1985, that was about it."

Was Furry Pirates difficult to write?

Lise – "Much easier, probably, than gaming books that describe a wholly original world. I'm in awe of them. You do enough research, and a book almost writes itself, but to come up with something totally your own, that's hard."
Bruce – "From a gaming point of view, it was hard to come up with the ship-to-ship combat rules. There wasn't much historical data to go on. We had over twenty different kinds of ships, all from different parts of the world, and we needed to create all these velocity tables for each one. We had many debates about which would do better in which kind of wind. Plus, we didn't want the players to get too bogged down in the combat of scores of pirates fighting scores of soldiers. The original system would have handled that one at a time, which would takes weeks to resolve. So we created a gestalt combat rule for large groups."

Why Furries?

Lise – "Bruce came up with idea of Furry Outlaws the same way he usually does, by trying it out on a group of friends. And then, after he had gotten his game system sufficiently refined, he was casting around for a good story concept to pair it with, and I told him Furry Outlaws had probably been the most popular game he'd ever run."

Bruce – "I guess it started out as just another possible race in the gaming universe. You know, elves, dwarves, orcs, and so forth. A furry offered a whole new group of races: Feline, Canine, whatever. I started running this fem-fatale furry cat ninja named Arial. She was one of my all-time favorite characters. So when we started working on a book, we had already become good friends of Terrie Smith, and been to a couple of furrycons. And I noticed that there was this niche group of people who were furry gamers. Yet there really wasn't much out there for them. I thought it would be perfect arena to get started in."

Is there going to be another Furry gamebook?

Bruce – "Right now, we've moved on to other projects. I'm currently involved in pottery and sculpture – check out www.hotmarscube.com – and on the gaming front, a project called Mythic Heroes (www.mythicheroes.com). But if someone wants to use the Halogen system or the furry universe we created to make another Furry _whatever_, we'd be happy to discuss a licensing deal."

Lise – "I'm a bit too busy being a mom and a lawyer now, I'm afraid. *sighs* If I may make a recommendation to "someone," though, I'd love to see a Furry game set during the Napoleonic Wars. It's a fascinating period, also popular, and the sailing rules wouldn't need to be changed at all. I can just see a Furry Captain Hornblower on the cover. Sexy!"

What would you change about Furry Pirates now?

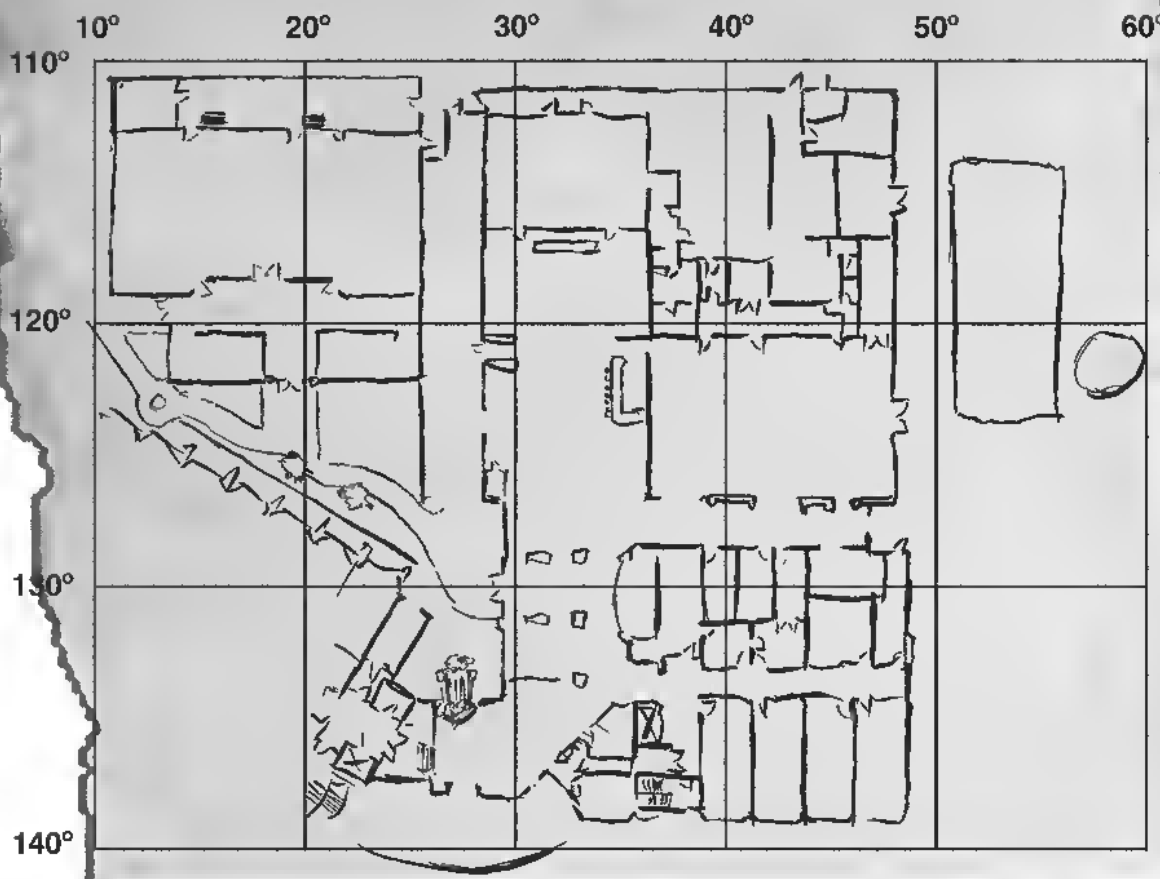
Lise – "I would have the rules reflect more of the diversity of furry species. Some creatures should be better at doing certain things than others. More adventure hooks would be nice too."

Bruce – "I'm not sure, as it was it took a considerable amount of effort. I guess some more flavor text, such as a captain's log, like a sidebar journal spread throughout the book, would have been a nice."

Art By
Terri Smith

Art By
N2Kenai

Treasure Map



continued from page 9

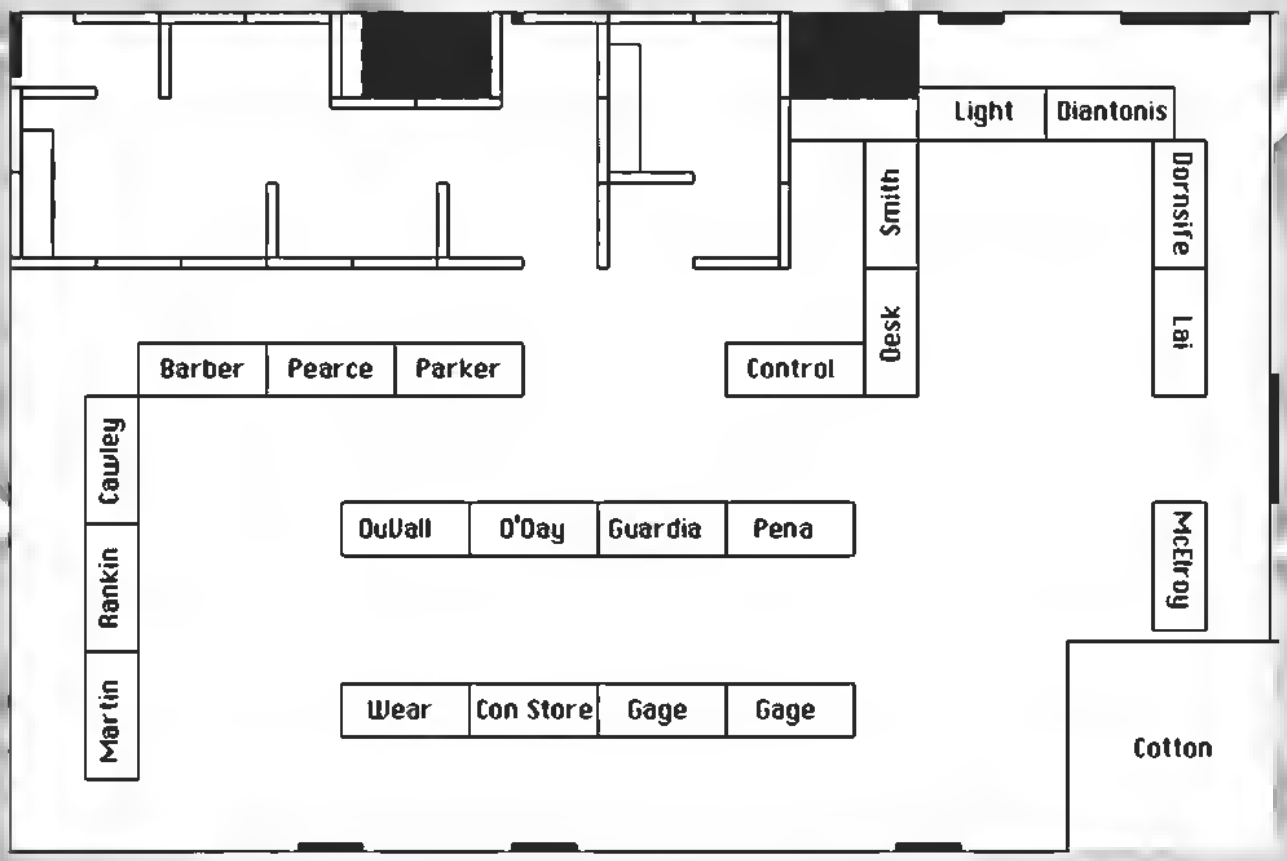
you'll likely be back for more. If you haven't experienced Furry's own "native son" comic, plan on not missing his act this year. Filk is the do-it-yourself folk music of Fandom (including Furry), and often we will have a guest or two performing in concert. Or you can sit in on the more informal "Filk circles", a kind of musical SIG, where Furry Filkers play the "old standards" or try out new songs. At night, we Furrie's come out to dance! Usually there is more than one dance at a Furry convention, complete with a Furry DJ (or two). Under the colored lights and with a variety of dance music, the Furrie's can really strut their stuff!

So, that be quite a lot of interesting programming you may (or may not) have been missing at Furry conventions, but it doesn't stop there! Whenever Furrie's gather, they make their own good times. Scan the "scent post" (message board), where room parties and "artist jams" and other get-togethers are announced. Prowl the hallways (quietly) and you may stumble on to a few unannounced room parties or jam sessions, too. Some of these will be "invitation only", so don't barge right in, but many are open to whoever discovers them. Smaller room parties offer a change to meet and relate to other Furs in a more intimate setting. Furry is the most friendly and welcoming of all Fandoms, so do like Rikki Tikki Tav, the mongoose does: "Run, and find out!"

One more important thing t' be rememberin' about a Furry convention. A ship load of people work hard to make it happen. Not only other Furs, who are doing all this work for nothing except the desire to help the community, but the staff of the hotel who are hosting the convention. Be polite and give the staff, Furry or otherwise, a tip-o-the hat and a thank-you for their efforts. You may even consider coming aboard, joining the crew and helping to make it all happen. It be another way to have fun at a Furry event, believe me!

I hope all this has opened your eyes to the hidden treasure that convention programming, both "official" and not, can be. If you keep your eyes and ears open, stay alert and watch for the signs (the program guide, daily newsletter and scent post), you're sure to find something that be worth its weight in gold!

Dealers Den



Time as marked by the bells

The use of the bells to mark the time stems from the period when seamen could not afford a personal time-piece (i.e. - a watch) and, even if they could, they had no idea on how to tell time with such an instrument. The bells mark the hours of the watch in half-hour increments. The seamen would know if it were morning, noon, or night. Each watch* is four hours long and the bells are struck thus:

Mid	Morning	Forenoon	Afternoon	Dogs*	First
0030 - 1 bell	0430 - 1 bell	0830 - 1 bell	1230 - 1 bell	1630 - 1 bell	2030 - 1 bell
0100 - 2 bells	0500 - 2 bells	0900 - 2 bells	1300 - 2 bells	1700 - 2 bells	2100 - 2 bells
0130 - 3 bells	0530 - 3 bells	0930 - 3 bells	1330 - 3 bells	1730 - 3 bells	2130 - 3 bells
0200 - 4 bells	0600 - 4 bells	1000 - 4 bells	1400 - 4 bells	1800 - 4 bells	2200 - 4 bells
0230 - 5 bells	0630 - 5 bells	1030 - 5 bells	1430 - 5 bells	1830 - 5 bells	2230 - 5 bells
0300 - 6 bells	0700 - 6 bells	1100 - 6 bells	1500 - 6 bells	1900 - 6 bells	2300 - 6 bells
0330 - 7 bells	0730 - 7 bells	1130 - 7 bells	1530 - 7 bells	1930 - 7 bells	2330 - 7 bells
0400 - 8 bells**	0800 - 8 bells	1200 - 8 bells	1600 - 8 bells	2000 - 8 bells	2400 - 8 bells

Notes: * - The period from 1600 to 2000 is split into two dog watches. These watches run from 1600 to 1800 and from 1800 to 2000. This alternates the daily watch routine so Sailors on the mid-watch would not have it the second night, and, the split also gives each watch stander the opportunity to eat the evening meal.
** - The end of the watch is considered at 8 bells, hence the saying "Eight Bells and All Is Well."

Booty

By Kay Shapero

Located right next to the spaceport, Pytan's Rest was the biggest; indeed the ONLY inn inside Farm Asteroid B4376xs, a typically hollowed and spun construction locally known as Central Garden. Not that they got enough traffic for more than one inn. It was owned by Grayan Pytan and family, and, with the occasional help of a couple of part timers from nearby run by them as well. Mostly "and family", which was to say while Grayan did the cooking and general interacting with the guests, 10 year old Chel did anything else that didn't require heavy lifting. The only other Pytan to hand was Chel's grandfather, Ostein, who limited his activities to relaxing in the garden reading, sipping something cool and asking Chel or Grayan to run errands for him. That and fishing. There was a special fishing lake about a kilometer off, and he would take chair and fish rod and spend all day there.

Ostein was hardly helpless, and, when, after one exceptionally busy day Chel got up the nerve to ask why HE got to sit around and rest, he just laughed. "It's simple, me boy. Y'see, I own the inn outright - sold me ship to pay for it, but I didn't touch any of me other treasures, out there." He waved generally - any direction will do if you want to point to the universe. "Ain't got anybody to leave it to but yer mom and ye, and a'course ye two are in me will... but I could always leave it to the Home for Retired Smugglers or something if I got too annoyed. So 'ts in her interest to keep me happy." He laughed again.

"Treasure?" asked Chel, "Were you a space-booter, Grandpa?"

"Never ye mind about that, boy, there's plenty a ways to make a bundle out on the spaceways, legal and otherways." And that was all he had to say on the subject.

Or at least all he had to say until the day Ostein opened the door of his room, to see a pile of bed linen with two feet on the other side. Muffled by the pile came the voice of Chel plaintively saying "Mom asked me to make your bed."

"Come in, me boy." Ostein laughed, "just let me put this away." He slipped a folded piece of paper into a blue pouch of the kind ship's papers are stored in, along with an angular force key, opened the old space chest at the foot of his bed and placed it inside. He closed the lid.

Chel dropped the bed linen on the chest and started to strip the bed.

"What was that, Grandpa?" he asked.
"Just me old treasure map," replied Ostein. "I like to look at it from time to time and reminisce."

"Wow," said Chel, "Can I look at it?"

"Maybe someday."

Chel made up the bed, then left with the dirty linens, giving Ostein a hopeful smile, which got no response. But from then on whenever he was in the room he would look at the old space chest and wonder about the contents.

It was the other side of his 11th birthday before he got that chance. He had been given a rare afternoon off, and had headed for the lake, not for fishing, which he didn't really care for but it was far enough that nobody would "forget" that he had the time off and order him to do something. Finding an unused skiff, he climbed in and pushed off, gliding past the stands of reed and water lily that bordered the lake, dreamily looking up toward the long thin sun and the hazy patches of farmland beyond it. "Che-ell...." came a distant sound. He drifted into the reeds, hoping it was just a bird.

No such luck - there was a much louder cry of "Che-elll!" and the reeds parted to reveal Lyessa, one of the occasional part-timers who helped when the inn was REALLY busy. From her lofty advantage of 15 years old, she eyed him coolly. "Quit hiding; a ship came in and Grayan wants you to come back and help. We've got three visitors, Outlanders!"

Chel started to protest, then as the last word seeped into his brain hastily started to pole the skiff back to the landing. "Outlanders? What kind? Where they from? What are they doing here? Why.."

Lyessa held up one hand to stem the tide. "I don't know. One of 'em looks like a really big praying mantis and the other two are furry with long tails like cats or foxes or somethin'. Come on, you're missing everything!"

Chel carefully tied up the skiff; one thing you got drilled into you at an early age around here was that you always left things as you found them, then hurried up the path to the inn.

Talk about the back of beyond, thought Myllis, surveying the inn greatroom casually from his position at one of the tables. His tail tip flicked slightly, belying his apparent calm. Saryan grinned at him, teeth carefully hidden. "Are ye sure we haven't wandered into the middle of a historical drama?" she said. "I doubt it," said Kiktri'k from where he stood (not being suited for sitting down) at the third side of the table. "That banner over there is obviously 4th century Sardrin while the ceiling light sticks are pure Mettrick Moderne. One or the other is totally out of period."

Grayan glided up to the table. "May I take your order, gentlefolk?"

Myllis looked back down at the projected menu. "Sunfish for me, with green tea " he said, glancing over at Saryan. "And for me, only with fennis syrup" she said. "Redstrype salad, please, with brennis" said Kiktri'k.

Grayan held up her notepad. "Biocheck, please." Each Outlander leaned over and touched the pad screen with their datasticks. "Thank you." She checked the screen, to make sure nobody had ordered anything inimical to their biosystems, then proceeded back behind the bar to the kitchen.

Chel came in through the side door of the greatroom; the front door was for guests, while it would hardly do to get bogged down in the kitchen before even getting the chance to see their unusual visitors. He looked around. There they were!

Lyessa's description was about right - two of them were a bit taller than Grayan, densely furred in a brown and black brindle pattern, shot with strips of pale gold. One wore a blue and gold kilt, and had a bright red satchel resting by his/her/its place at the table, the other, seated on the other side of the table from Chel's vantage point wore an open-sided tabard like a waterfall in multiple shades of green, with occasional streaks of gold that flashed as the wearer moved. The third was a head taller than the others, and stood with his back to Chel. He/she/it was dark to light green, exoskeletal, and wore nothing other than a pouch slung around... his/her - oh space it! Chel gave up on pronoun guessing and settled on "his" for anybody not obviously female - his middle. Very like a praying mantis. Chel dug through his memory from the school netcasts - the furry ones would be Brisail, and the one in the bright tabard probably female, while the mantid could be one of several species.

Grayan spotted him as she exited the kitchen, and waved him to her. He walked over.
"Here," she said, handing him a tray with a

heatermug full of tea and two clear glasses on it. "The green tea is for the one in blue, the fennis is for the one in green, and the brennis is for the standing one." She hurried back into the kitchen to fix the food.

Hardly believing his luck, Chel carefully balanced the three drinks on his tray and walked over to the three guests. Fortunately for everybody, his experience in waiting on local customers enabled him to set the drinks down smoothly before the correct recipients without spilling a drop, all without any input from his brain which was firmly fixed on seeing as much as he could of the visitors. His guess about the sexes of the Brisail was probably correct; at least the one in the tabard was more slender and delicate looking than the other, which would match what the schoolcast said about them. He still had no idea what the mantid was, if they even had the same sexes humans or Brisail had. The mantid was the first to pick up his drink, holding it up to the light to watch the subtle patterns of dark and light in the swirling liquid. He extruded a sort of straw from his face to take a sip. "Perfectly mixed. My compliments to the bartender."

"Uh, I'll tell her," said Chel, suddenly realizing that having served the drinks, he had no real excuse for standing here, and departed for the kitchen.

Saryan laughed again, a sound rather like the purring of a large kitten. "I think we just made his year."

Myllis made a face. "I just hope we didn't just waste ours."

"We haven't," said Kiktri'k looking up and across the table from where he stood.

Chel re-emerged from the kitchen, having delivered the message and picked up another tray of drinks, for three fascinated locals sitting at the next table over from the Outland guests. He placed the drinks on the table, then looked up to see the two Brisail push their chairs out slightly to look at the front door. He looked there too.

There stood Ostein, fishing pole and sightly dripping creel in one hand, folding chair in the other. He looked around the room, surveying the house, and spotted the Outlanders. He grinned, started forward and spotted Chel. "Chel! Just take these to the kitchen, will ye?" He held out the creel, rod and chair.

Chel started, picked up the tray he'd delivered the drinks on, and walked over to relieve Ostein of his burden. As he started back for the kitchen, Ostein pulled a chair out from an unoccupied table (not that there were many of those left - word was spreading fast), moved it over to the table with the Outlanders and sat down.

Back in the kitchen, Chel removed the fish from the creel, cleaned them and stored them in the stasis tank, hung creel and fish-pole on their usual hooks by the door, leaned the folding chair against the wall beneath them for the moment, and generally did useful things for the eternity it took for the sunfish and redstrype plates to be finished. By now there were so many customers and orders pouring in that there was no question of Grayan having time to serve, and both Lyessa and Duan, the other part-timer were pressed into service. Chel being the best waiter of them all took the food to the Outlander table.

The conversation at the table was so intense that the Outlanders hardly noticed when the food was put down before them. But Ostein did. He looked up at Chel and grinned at the others. "Hey, mates, let me introduce ye to me grandson, Chel." The Outlanders looked up then. "These're three a the finest spacers I ever shipped with; Saryan (he indicated the Brisail in green) was our pilot, Myllis (the other Brisail) our navigator, Kiktri'k (the mantid) our engineer way back in our early days on the old SunSeeker." The Outlanders nodded gravely to the stunned Chel. "Ok, lad, now bring me a steak sandwich and coffee." Chel blinked, then recovered himself and headed for the kitchen.

"Ye still drink that horrible stuff?" asked Saryan.

"What of it?" asked Ostein. "I see ye still like that sticky fennis stuff. I should think it would be like drinking glue."

Saryan laughed.

"I believe I will stick to brennis," commented Kiktri'k. The darker thread of his drink was now almost completely gone, leaving it pale gold.

"Given that tea and coffee would make ye sick and fennis gum up regions no proper Chennis would mention, I shouldn't wonder," said Saryan.

Myllis simply drank his tea and ate his sunfish, without comment. There would be time for proper discussion later, when fewer eyes were watching and ears listening.

--

Even the longest run on a restaurant ends eventually, and finally everybody had finished eating, and most had run out of excuses to hang around instead of going home. Even with modern equipment, a farmer gets up early; at last the only people at the inn were the Pytans and their guests, who would be staying overnight.

The two Brisail had taken one room, the Chennis (Chel had finally gotten the chance to check the net) another. They all gathered briefly in Ostein's room, but found it too small, so all three had gathered in the upstairs room taken by the Brisail, followed shortly by Ostein carrying a few bottles of his private stock (from the space chest) , leaving instructions to the rest of the family that nothing more would be required.

Down in the kitchen, with the last of the cooking gear cleaned and put away (Chel didn't think there was a pan in the house that hadn't been used tonight), Chel saw the folding chair which Grayan had completely forgotten, and decided to further demonstrate his responsibility by put it away unasked. The fact that Ostein's room was right under the one with the conversation in it had nothing to do with this, of course.

Chel lugged the chair to Ostein's room, and put it into the closet where his grandfather usually kept it. He listened carefully, but the ceiling soundproofing was working annoyingly well. Maybe if he got closer... He tried standing on Ostein's old space chest, but that didn't work either. He studied the chest; sturdy as all such things were, it was designed to stand equally well on any side or even on end. Carefully upending it, he glanced around the room, and spotted a glass. Picking it up, he climbed carefully up the side of the bed and stood on top of the chest, putting the glass against the ceiling, and his ear to the other end, promptly lost his balance, and fell onto the bed. He froze, half expecting to hear feet pounding down the hall, but nobody came. He put the glass back down as being more of a hindrance than a help and tried it again.

This was better - at least he didn't fall over. He listened carefully, and heard vague whispers.. no, it wasn't the conversation it was the ceiling air duct fan. Drats! He looked around the room from his unfamiliar vantage point. Hmm... maybe the closet ceiling was less insulated? Couldn't hurt.

He climbed back down to the floor, and walked into the closet, opened the fishing chair and stood on it. And at last heard his grandfather's voice saying "I'll admit it's tempting, but I'm afraid I've retired." Other voices said something unintelligible. "Agreed," said his grandfather's voice. "It's certainly the best..." his voice faded out as he moved away from whatever was allowing his voice to come through. Chel listened for several minutes, but finally gave up.

He climbed back down off the chair, stood it back up, and left the closet.

Better not leave the space chest on end. He braced himself and carefully lowered it until he had it about three inches from the floor at which point it slipped and landed in its proper place with a thud. Chel was about to sprint from the room when something he'd seen finally worked its way through to his head. The top of the chest had bounced slightly when it hit the floor. He reached out, touched it. Sure enough, the space chest was unlocked.

Chel didn't stop to think - he simply opened the chest, looked inside, spotted the old ship-paper pouch, and pulled it out. He opened it, removed the folded paper and key, closed it again and replaced it in the chest, shoving the contents back to the side to approximate their location before the movement of the chest. He shut the chest, and ran across the hall to his own room, clutching his prize. Turning on his desk lamp, he unfolded the paper.

As a treasure map, it was rather a disappointment – no "walk five paces south from the black oak tree" or "X marks the spot", just a series of paired numbers and letters, on a torn piece of printer paper. The force-key was better; a rough angular piece of metal that when brought into contact with just the right lock would extend narrow force tendrils that would cause the lock to open. There were better security measures, but if you had to lock something up for a long time and release it only to the bearer of the one and only key, it was hard to beat the force-key/lock combination. Chel had started to look up force-keys on the net, when abruptly it hit him just what he had done. If Ostein found out! Better get these back into the chest at once.

Too late! He heard Ostein's familiar tread out in the hall. Followed by a quieter step Chel didn't recognize; presumably one of the guests. The steps stopped, and there was the sound of an opening door. Voices, almost intelligible.

Chel cracked the door and peeked out. Ostein's room was small, not much bigger than the ship's cabin it was designed to resemble, and the door was wide open so he could see the entire room with the exception of the closet. Ostein stood before his bed, facing Myllis. "I'm sorry," he said, "But believe me, ye don't want that map."

"It is only accident that ye have it and we do not. We offered ye a fair share but apparently ye aren't interested. Fine; it does ye no good here and it would do yer old shipmates a great deal of it. Yes, we want that map."

Ostein shrugged, reached down and opened the chest, removing the blue ship-papers pouch.

"Ye can still change yer mind."

Myllis reached over for the pouch. In doing so, his right hand was revealed clutching a needler, pointed at Ostein!

Chel gasped, faintly.

Kiktri'k came into view, reached into the room, and took the pouch from Myllis, opened it. "Empty," he said.

"Care to try that again?" asked Myllis "I can wait as long as ye can."

Ostein sounded genuinely surprised. "I assure ye that's where I keep it. If it's not there, I don't know where it is."

"But I believe I do," a third voice joined the conversation. Chel's door opened abruptly, and a furred hand reached in to grab him and haul him out of the room, the papers and key still in his hand. "Now then, lad," asked Saryan. "Would ye rather have a list of numbers and a useless key or yer grandfather?" Shivering, Chel held out the items. "Wise choice," said Saryan. She held tightly to his arm.

Myllis backed slowly out of the room, needler still on Ostein. "We will take the lad with us until we're away, then return him to ye. Just to make sure."

"Leave the boy," said Ostein. "Ye can have the map with me blessing."

"That we will, and ye'll get him back soon enough. Now, where's the quickest exit. Remember what could happen if anybody sees us."

"Try the kitchen. Chel and I always go out that way when we go fishing. He's quite a fisherman, if I do say meself. Cooks 'em up real well, too."

Huh? Chel wasn't that bad at cooking, but he was a rotten fisherman, and didn't care who knew it. What was Ostein talking about?

Chel was dragged down the hall with the three Outlanders, and off to the kitchen. The lights were off, leaving no light in the room save what leaked in from outside, where the moon-setting was at half level tonight. Just enough to reveal stacks of pans and...

OH! Suddenly Chel caught Ostein's hint. As they exited the door, he reached out for the fish-pole with his free hand and swung it across the nearest stack, which fell with a resounding CRASH! Plates and pans went spinning across the floor, as Chel wrenched free from the startled Saryan's grip, and fled back out through the door. Right past Ostein, who was carrying a large flashlight in one hand and an equally large blaster pistol in the other. He shone the flashlight at the Outlanders.

"Get out of me house!" Ostein roared. "Take yer map and get off of me world right now before I fire!"

The three Outlanders recovered their balance and fled through the other door, into the night.

Chel jumped up. "I'll call the spaceport and tell them to stop those pirates."

"Ye'll do nothing of the kind," said Ostein. "Let them go. They were honorable shipmates once, regardless of what they are now. They can yet find their way back. I'll give 'em the chance."

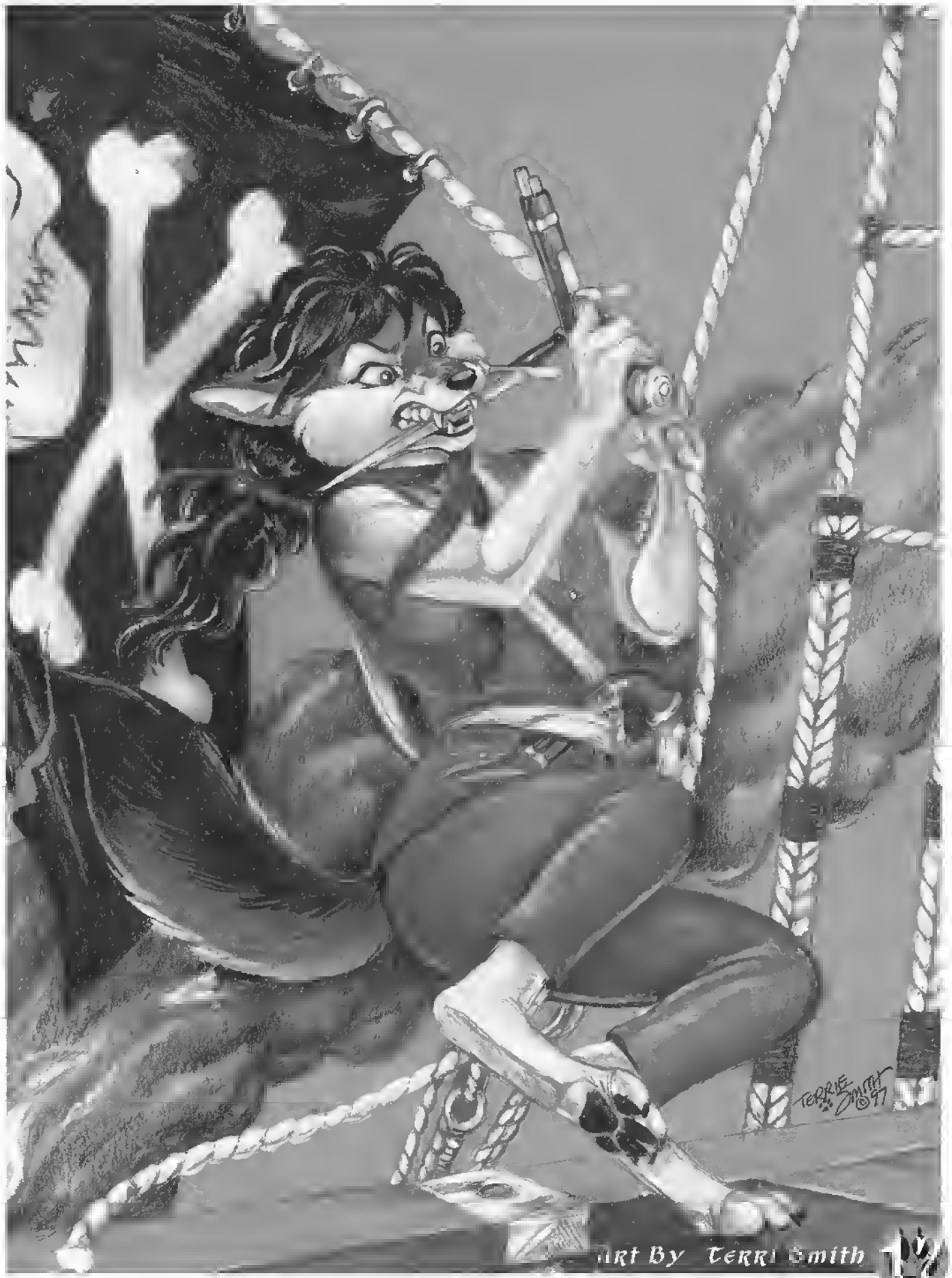
"But the map! Your treasure!"

"Lad, lad, d'ye really think I would trust me treasure to anything so obvious and fragile as that? That's not what the map leads to. The SunSeeker did her share of salvage work, and we used that asteroid for storage of things of value that couldn't be immediately sold, but never for more than a year or two. And long after that trio left her, we cleaned out the vault once and for all, and each took a share and went our ways. That's how I got the ship I sold to buy this place. Naw, lad, I seriously doubt there's anything there now but the vault and the lock. Those force locks last for generations. And knowing the skipper, I'll bet there's a nasty trap waiting for anybody who doesn't know what to do besides turn the key. I did try to warn them."

"Where is your treasure, then?" asked Chel.

"Oh, it's in a very safe place indeed. No pirate will ever be stealing it, I assure ye. Now, me lad, I think there's been enough excitement for one night. Come back with me and I'll show ye the rest of the contents of me space chest, and then ye can go to bed."

With Chel safely tucked away, Ostein called the spaceport, and made sure the three Outlanders had departed. With luck they might make it clear to others of their ilk that he no longer had that map and key. He sat down on his bunk and chuckled, faintly. Yes, his treasure was safe indeed - most of it spent wisely on wine, women and song as fast as he made it, the rest to buy his ship, and ultimately, that ship on his family. What greater treasure could a man want?



Art By Terri Smith

Art By Brown Kuma

Mahalo nui loa for joining me for dinner boys! You all look delicious!

Art By Daniel Keller

Art By Ironbadger

Art By
BAKA SUKONKU

Art By Brian Wear

Art By Le Chevalier

Art By Peter Boye

Art By Lynda Lehman

The Ursa Major Awards

Nominations for the 2005 Ursa Major Awards for the Best Anthropomorphic Literature and Art of that year have been tabulated. There are the five finalists in most categories.

Remember, voting for the 2006 Ursa Major Awards (for 2005) closes on May 6 — right in the middle of CalliFur!

So be sure to visit www.ursamajorawards.org and find out more about voting. And do it soon!

FurryGear

http://www.furrygear.com/

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